

the sombre surroundings. She would look at the observer with head up, in the alert, enquiring attitude depicted in the photograph, apparently ready to leave the nest on the slightest alarm. When leaving, she would rise, as a rule, with a great clatter of wings and vanish in the bush. At other times she fluttered to the ground and vibrated her wings rapidly, either in simulation of injury, or, possibly, to remove the cramped feeling due to long sitting on the nest. After a short time, she flew away. On one occasion, I flushed two pairs of Bronzewings close at hand and went to the nest expecting to find the bird absent, but she was still brooding. When not molested, I believe that the Bronzewing sits very closely, probably feeding the young—by regurgitation—at long intervals only.

It appears that the birds do not search for seeds at random, but have regular feeding haunts, usually where seeds to which they are partial are abundant. To these feeding grounds they evidently return again and again. At all events, the birds are flushed repeatedly from the same spots. Apparently they are very fond of the seeds of *Acacias* and the introduced gorse.

On December 27th everything was in readiness, but the weather was very cloudy, and the light poor. However, a prospect of a break in the fleecing clouds with the chance of a short burst of sunlight offered. After a fair wait, I was able to expose one plate on the sitting bird. She did not leave the nest as the shutter went up, but stretched her neck enquiringly.

Apparently the climax was reached when I went aloft to change the slides, for the bird left, and, I believe, never returned. I was exceedingly sorry to think that the photograph cost the lives of the helpless nestlings. However, Mr. A. J. Campbell inclines to the belief that the bird was probably shot, as she would not willingly desert her young.

Fortunately, the single exposure was successful. After my experience at this nest, I certainly do not expect to have another such opportunity with the Bronzewing at home.—S. F. F. THOMSON, R.A.O.U., Canterbury, Vic.

State Secretaries' Reports

QUEENSLAND.

Provision having been made in the Animals and Bird Act of 1921 for the promulgation of Regulations to improve the working of the Act, the Government has, with the concurrence of naturalists, issued an important series of orders governing the control of fauna, both native and introduced. These came into effect before the shooting and trapping season opened in Southern Queensland at the beginning of April. Trappers of native birds or animals are now required to pay a fee of five shillings per annum, and dealers must pay ten shillings each year. Every

dealer and other keeper of native fauna are required to keep records on specially-prepared forms. It is also incumbent, on pain of licences being revoked, that shops and cages be kept in a clean condition, that the captives be regularly fed and watered, and that only a limited number be kept in one cage. Trappers are not permitted to use at night, for the purpose of killing or capturing birds or animals, electric torches, acetylene lamps, or flash lights of any kind whatever. (The Act itself specifically prohibits the use of cyanide—what bushmen term "flour"—or any other poison, so that operations at night are limited to trapping. This stricture does not meet with the approval of shooters of the unfortunate koalas and opossums.)

Another notable Order-in-Council is one bringing into effect, for the first time, a limitation on game-bags. The numbers of particular birds which any one person may take or kill or have in possession during one day are as follow:—Quail, 25; Wild Ducks, 20; Wild Geese, 10; Pigeons, 10; Plovers, 10; Plain Turkeys, 2; Scrub Turkeys, 2. In the case of Pigeons, the Squatter (*Geophaps scripta*), and the fine King Pigeon, or Wompoo (*Megaloprepia magnifica*) are excepted, these two decimated species being now protected for the whole year. Under the old Acts it was customary to list all protected birds and animals. Now only the non-protected and partially-protected species are listed. These providing a less lengthy list, and being better known than most of the totally-protected species, the reader can grasp the position at a glance; so that there can be no plea of "didn't know it was protected." The only birds not protected at any period in Queensland are the introduced birds, also the White Cockatoos, the Cockatiel (*Leptolophus*) the Galah, the Budgerigah, and the Rosella Parrots (all regarded as cage-birds) and the Cormorants, Crows, and Currawong (Pied Bell-Magpie), all of which are in disfavour as being troublesome.

Sanctuaries continue to be proclaimed, notably about Rockhampton, where members of the Central Queensland Native Birds Protection Association are going on with their good work. Mr. H. Tryon, a member of the Council of the R.A.O.U., who was in Rockhampton recently, and who was welcomed by the Association, states that he has not seen aquatic birds to better advantage than about the Rockhampton sanctuaries. Prior to that, Mr. W. B. Alexander, another member of the Council, who spent a day or two at Rockhampton on his way to the prickly pear laboratory at Westwood, was driven about the district lagoons by officers of the Association. Mr. Alexander was well pleased with all he saw. Previously, again, the State Secretary was similarly entertained by officers of the Association, under whose auspices he lectured when *en route* to Dunk Island.

The value of native birds was not lost sight of by the Australian Forestry Conference which sat in Brisbane in April, and to which the State Secretary was a delegate from the Queens-

land section of the Empire Forestry Association. One of the sessions of the Conference was held at Imbil, adjacent to the great Brooloo State Forest, about 100 miles north of Brisbane, and at that gathering instructive reference to birds was made by Mr. W. R. Petrie, deputy forester and capable bush naturalist. In the course of "Some Notes on Problems of Silviculture in Queensland," Mr. Petrie stated: "The harm done by insects can I am convinced, be controlled by increasing our bird life: the Scrub Turkey not only destroys the casual cockchafer beetle and larva by eating, but prevents immense numbers from doing harm by supplying conditions which induce them to congregate in huge nests to be eaten later. This bird is accused of preventing hoop pine regeneration by scratching, but as its most drastic scratchings (to form its huge nest) are not commenced for six or seven months after hoop pine seed-fall, and discontinued long before the next fall, I think that more good than harm is done by giving the seed a better chance of coming in contact with the mineral soil."

A. H. CHISHOLM,

State Secretary.

Stray Feathers

Bird Territories.—In *The Emu* for April, 1922 (vol. xxi., part 4, pages 258-9, Mr. Charles Barrett states that, in studying the Warblers, Eliot Howard "became aware of the fact that each male isolates itself at the commencement of the breeding season, and exercises dominion over a restricted area of ground." "Here" Mr. Barrett interpolates, "is an untilled field for Australian observers." Also, quoting again from Eliot Howard, "Often enough the males fight after they have mated, or a male with a nest building may attack an unmated bird which ventures into his territory. The evidence in support of the theory of territory in bird life is lucidly discussed in Eliot Howard's work."

I dealt with the subject of bird territories in the story of the Blue Wren, or Superb Warbler, in my book, "Friends and Foes in the Australian Bush," published in London and Australia by Messrs. Whitcombe and Tombs in 1914. The story was first published in *The Sydney Mail* in 1911, and reappears in "Spotty the Bower Bird" published last year. I have not seen Eliot Howard's book, but believe that it was published only recently.

When following this matter, many years ago, I found that even Crows hunted over restricted areas. One marked bird I had under observation in the north-west corner of New South Wales led to the discovery of a roosting tree. The marked Crow was always with one small company, and that company roosted every night in one particular tree, though there were hundreds of similar trees about. The birds hunted over miles of country